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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY

NOVEMBER 14, 2002

1. This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for November 14, 2002. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICS, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

2. REPAIR CONTINUES AT ADANA AIRPORT
(Hurriyet/Bolge) Maintenance and repair work continues at the Adana Airport, which was closed to flights on November 4. Officials from the State Airports Administration (DHMI) in Adana said DHMI was exerting efforts to complete the renovation project within the stated period of time and re-open it on December 31. Contracting firm, MON, which won the bidding tender, has begun to remove the asphalt of the 2,750-meter runway. The estimated cost of the project is TL 6.8 trillion (approx. USD 4.1 million).

3. VILLAGE RETURN PROJECT
(Milli Gazete/Turkiye) The Siirt Governor's Office reportedly placed weight on the Village Return Project in Siirt following the restoration of calm in the Southeast. Under the project, infrastructure services have been completed in residential areas and centralized villages, with residential units constructed in Eruh's (Siirt) Cizmeli village opened to evacuees' settlement. Governor Nuri Okutan said he had mobilized all resources to implement the project, of which 80% has been completed. "There is quite a high demand for returns in our region," Okutan added.

ECONOMIC AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

3. SOUTHEAST ECONOMIC WOE
(Evrensel) Over the past four years, the number of Guroymak (Bitlis) merchants decreased by 30%, falling from 480 to 300, due to the economic crisis. Nearly another 40 merchants are preparing to close down. Guroymak Merchants and Artisans Chamber President Fedai Erdanis said dozens of merchants had applied to the chamber to de-register. "No merchants will remain in Guroymak at this rate," he added.

4. ADANA BUSINESSMEN OPTIMISTIC ABOUT NEW GOVERNMENT
(Bolge) The board of directors of the Adana Chamber of Commerce emphasized the importance of the positive environment created by the one-party government formula that came out of the November 3 elections in terms of solving problems facing Adana, as well as Turkey. They described the outcome as a big opportunity. "People have displayed their attitudes toward the coalition governments by giving AKP the ability to form a single-party government by itself due to what was experienced during the last (outgoing) government's period.
HOLTZ